

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT
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FILE ONLY

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Another Spy Suspect Arrested

RICHARD THRELKELD: Federal agents today arrested a former communications specialist for the National Security Agency and charged him with spying. It is the fourth spy arrest they've made in a week.

Here's ABC's Dennis Troute.

J DENNIS TROUTE: From 1965 to 1979 Ronald William Pelton worked for the super-secret National Security Agency, the government agency charged with making and breaking codes and analyzing foreign communications. Federal prosecutors said today in a Baltimore court that Pelton admitted selling government secrets to Moscow. He reportedly described filing for bankruptcy in 1979 and going to the Soviet Embassy in Washington in 1980 to strike a bargain to exchange American secrets for money. He said he dealt with a Soviet agent named Anatoly Slavnov and made several trips between 1980 and 1983 to Vienna, Austria for long debriefings. One payoff noted, \$15,000 in January 1983.

Experts say Pelton's information would have been worth every dime.

J JAMES BAMFORD: It would be damaging in the respect that we send our most secure information in code. And if a person has access to those codes and passes that information on to the Soviet Union, it could seriously jeopardize that information.

TROUTE: Federal agents have found themselves awash in spy cases during the last week. They've accused former CIA man Larry Wu-Tai Chin of delivering American secrets to Peking for 30 years. Sources tell ABC News Chin acknowledged suggesting a replacement to the Chinese after he retired in 1981. So there may be another arrest in this Chinese Connection.

And Ann Henderson Pollard has been charged along with her husband Jonathan with delivering defense information to foreign governments, reportedly Israel and Pakistan.

The larger number of spy arrests raises the question in Official Washington of whether authorities now are doing better at policing espionage, or whether more Americans are spying.